

1 July 1958

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT : Comments on Technical Task Group Meeting on Satellite Tracking Cameras on 1 July 1958

REFERENCE: Commerce Memorandum PC-4020-CF of 1 July 1958 on above subject

1. With respect to Mr. Maschke's statement as set forth in the referenced memorandum (see first paragraph under B-1 of referenced memorandum), Mr. Maschke also made the point that these cameras could geodetically position satellites, which would appear to have strategic usefulness. He did not say as reported in the referenced memorandum that the provision of these cameras represented a "break through" for the Russians but did say that it could represent a saving of time of perhaps as much as three years in Soviet development of a similar camera.

2. The last paragraph under B-1 of the referenced memorandum reads as follows:

In reference to the camera lens being a technical gain by the USSR (Air Force memorandum), Mr. Tansy stated that there were only five people in the world that were capable of producing these lens and that one of them was a Russian.

The above paragraph implies that there would not be a technical gain to the USSR in providing them with the cameras. While Mr. Tansy's statement that one of the people capable of producing these lens is a Russian is apparently true, it is my understanding that despite this capability the development of the lens without specifications would involve considerable research time on the part of the Soviet. D/CP confirms that this is also their understanding.

3. There appeared to be general agreement at the meeting that whether or not strategic use was demonstrable, these cameras represented a scientific achievement that the Soviet would be pleased to have and an adequate quid pro quo should be ascertained should their export be authorized. The quid pro quo suggested varied from the RY peoples' suggestion that providing these cameras would engender good will leading to an exchange of information (including the data developed by the Soviet with these cameras) to suggestions that we should receive similar Soviet equipment as proposed by the DOD. (The minutes of the Informal Working Group on RY dated 2 June 1958 suggest possible quid pro quo; paragraph 1-4).

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4. My evaluation of the statements made at the meeting might be summarized as follows:


a. The cameras cannot be used efficiently for the detection of missiles (guided or unguided) launched by a hostile country.

b. While these cameras represent the best method of fixing a very small satellite with respect to its position over the earth's surface, there are at least equally efficient methods for so fixing larger satellites.

c. The Strategic significance of these cameras with respect to offensive or defensive warfare has not been demonstrated; scientific significance has been demonstrated.

d. A quid pro quo might be exacted from the Soviet in connection with the provision of these cameras to them. Subject to the determination by those qualified to judge what represents adequate quid pro quo and its successful negotiation, the export of the cameras to the Soviet could be justified as in the best interests of the United States.

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S/ID

Area Records Officer, ORR
THRU : Chief, D/S
Acting Chief, S/TD

27 June 1958

Destruction of Records, (4th Quarter Fiscal Year 1958) Reports of

No records were destroyed by S/TD during the fourth quarter
of the fiscal year 1958.

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